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THE INVESTIGATOR,

OR
UNIVERSAL CRITERION OF KNOWLEDGE.

EXPLAINING
THE MYSTERIOUS PHÆNOMENA OF NATURE.

FROM THE COMMENCEMENT TO THE CONCLUSION OF

T I M E.

This original philosophic and astronomical ANALYSIS will enable every Person, through the Testimony of the sensitive Mind, to understand, by visible Objects, the Reality of invisible Existence; being a System of ETHICS, containing a comprehensive explanation of the Creation, Structure, Substance, Growth, Progeny, and Decay of animate Bodies and inanimate Substances; and the Origin of Distempers; with requisite Instructions for the Preservation of Health: illustrated by Anatomical observations.

These several Topics of Importance are incontrovertibly proved, by a rational and impartial Discussion.

Edward Dunn

From matter then to spirit still ascend,
Thro' spirit still refining, higher tend;
Pursue, on knowledge bent, the pathless road,
Pierce through infinitude in quest of God!

Boyle.

L O N D O N:

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The Book wants all right page 36
B.L.



EXORDIUM.

THE Author respectfully informs the Amateurs of that most sublime of all sciences Philosophy, that in this analysis of visible and invisible existence, he has endeavoured to investigate and trace nature to its source.

This impartial system, cannot offend any description of sectarians, and is intended as a compendium of instruction, to develop the most intricate and profound mysteries of nature.

Although the Christian religion has been extended over various parts of the habitable world; it is irrational to suppose that the Deity has neglected to infuse into the professors of other doctrines an innate propensity to receive instruction. The natural endowments and moral principles of Jews, Mahometans, and Pagans are equal if not superior to those of Christians, as is evinced by the conscientiousness of their dealings with each other, and by our most prominent characteristic being to take advantage, not only of strangers, but of our nearest kindred and acquaintance. Their apparent ignorance occurs from being destitute of those advantages which result from not being initiated in the liberal sciences.

The author reveres the sacred writings; but his present work being a philosophical and not a
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religious disquisition of nature, requests that no person will endeavour to confute the propriety of his observations, by quotations from scripture.

Bigoted persons, instead of rightly construing and interpreting the meaning of the sacred text, confound and involve it in inexplicable perplexity by the ambiguity of their doctrine, similar to an indifferent mechanic, who, by awkwardly applying the implements of his profession, defeats instead of effecting his intended purpose.

The Scripture, the Talmud, the Alcoran, or any traditional evidence produced by man, cannot prescribe rules and ordinances, for the Deity to accomplish his vast unlimited designs.

The criterion for all persons to judge of the merits of others, previous to their forming a determination is to take a general retrospect of their own intellectual principles and conduct, independent of the prejudice of education, and of the innovations that occur from custom and habit. This is the most easy and reasonable method for others to comprehend the succeeding discussions, and will give them more insight into the motives that influence their fellow creatures, than can possibly be acquired by any other investigation.

Prejudice and rash opinion, are the offspring of ignorance and conceit, and by perverting the judgment, are the bane of natural knowledge. Wilfully to persist in such false systems, is to give a decided negative to truth, that is evidently communicated for the instruction of mankind

Persons

Persons ought to argue from experimental demonstration, because the benign influence of the Deity is sufficiently distributed among rational persons to enable them to judge of the invisible cause of all existence, by its operative effects on visible nature.

These sentiments, have stimulated him to search into the occult causes of universal nature, and by comparing mortal with eternal existence, convinces him, that they are the production of the omnipresent Spirit of the Deity.

To trace and develop the origin of creation, to refute the absurd inconsistencies that have been advanced, by persons of various ages and countries, are difficult, but important considerations: and human nature is too habituated to vice, to believe divine truths without ocular demonstration; therefore this subject is introduced to excite the disbelieving to a sense of their error. The author has in idea traversed over the whole surface of the world, and penetrated into its most profound recesses: exploring every labyrinth that he conceived would be serviceable to his purpose: and has described every object, nearly the same as if he had seen them opened, dissected and analysed

This retrospective view, renders him capable of defining their several component parts: and to delineate the cause and effect of all past, present, and future, invisible and visible existence; describing what

they were, are, and will be, from the commencement to the conclusion of time.

This enchirefis, is published to impart and convey instruction to the understanding of every rational person, to render the works of nature intelligible, and encourage, not controvert, true philosophy.

The elucidation of philosophy should occupy the mind of all persons possessed of a sufficient capacity, and excite them to develope and explain the seeming abstruse mysteries of the universe, in the most energetic manner, and fix it on an immoveable basis, for the instruction of the present, and every future age. Such as are desirous of acquiring a comprehensive knowledge, should inspect every part of creation: and when aided by instruction, reason will assist the judgment and enable them by their ideas, to trace existence to its origin: and with some success comment on its operative effects.

He hopes a deliberate inquisitorial perusal of his disquisitions will be of service to the community: and assist those, who are desirous of attaining important knowledge, become a preparatory system of instruction to greater adepts in the phenomena of nature: and by enlightening community, incite them to a more dutiful respect and reverential awe of the Deity.

This discussion will help to destroy those chimeras that lead persons into the meanders of perplexity, and tend to extricate those victims of error from its labyrinths, by discovering, that there is a connection
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between the Deity, matter, and eternity: although they are underived of each other. The Deity can separate from matter; but he and eternity are indissoluble

The unlimited empire of the Deity is universally conspicuous in all luminous systems, and in each of their terrestrial bodies and substances. The fate of the smallest insect evinces this, as much as that of the greatest potentate.

Some persons of literary abilities, have attempted to explain these occult subjects; but in so superficial a manner, as not to produce the desired effect. The author has, therefore, endeavoured to render explicit those mysteries that ought to concern mankind. But the want of opportunity has prevented him from examining the works of most other authors on these subjects, that might have been of service to him, or probably have intimidated him from publishing his sentiments; therefore, he has persevered with unremitting attention and labour, in hopes of producing a useful publication: and if any of his ideas should resemble those of other authors, he wishes it to be understood, that it proceeds from the result of his own ideas and the genuine instinctive production inherent in his nature.

Plagiarists, like all other thieves, are continually in fear of detection; but where a similarity appears in the Works of different men who never had any intercourse or read each other's sentiments, they ought to be exempt from censure. Depending on the indulgence of mankind; he has been instigated to
promulgate

promulgate his opinions, which are submitted as an original source of information, and trusts they will produce a better effect upon the minds of others, than old ideas introduced in new language.—

Should the generality of his thoughts vary from those who have written on the same subject, without depreciating their merit, he affirms that it is from the investigation of nature.

Thoughts forming the principles of mankind, who all derive the sympathetic instinct of life from the same eternal Being, and are instigated by the same Spirit, it is rational to suppose, that persons residing at the opposite Poles, may possess the same ideas concerning the Deity, universal nature, or animate and inanimate existence; although they differ in their customs, education, language and behaviour. To dissent from this opinion, is to accuse the Deity of a partial distribution of his favors. The Omnipotent has infused into most persons, a requisite propensity for the attainment of knowledge, that, if carefully improved, will tend to the enlightening of mankind and reward those most, who make the best use of their talents, as is evinced by the services they have rendered to the less informed part of the community.

A studious attention to the attributes of nature, has induced the author at different intervals, to commit those spontaneous ideas to paper, which he conceived would enforce conviction of their propriety. He has impartially investigated and considered what may be advanced in favor, or against
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the different topics of his disquisitions. An indefatigable adherence to this pursuit, is the best operative principle to make an impression on the minds of others. His design will be accomplished if the philosophical system he is actuated to promulgate to posterity, should explain those intricate mysteries, that were obscure and incomprehensible to our ancestors, and should the doctrine, endeavoured to be inculcated, remove those dangerous *tenets* that at present involve all ranks of mankind, more or less, in error: and convey to the readers an adequate conception of the Deity, it will be a most pleasing reflection to him during the remainder of his life.

This being the author's first literary attempt, it would be manifest presumption to expect it to be an entire pansophy; but should it be deemed worthy of notice, it will afford him the most exulting satisfaction.

The compendious system here presented for the information of mankind, containing the most rational conclusions that could possibly be deduced, and the arguments proceeding from a most diligent and indefatigable investigation into nature, the author hopes, that by rendering it congenial to common sense, it will be understood by every capacity and autopsically be allowed to be orthodox.

The errors of sentiment and language that appear, he solicits may be attributed to their true causes, the not having been possessed of any mechanical apparatus to practice experimental philosophy, or been enabled more clearly to elucidate his conception

ceptions, through there being so many interpretations to the same word in the composition of the English Tongue. This implicit declaration and the rectitude of his intentions, he hopes, will exonerate him from the imputation of using delusive arguments to deceive the Public. He submits his intentions as the best palliative for any errors that may be discovered. These circumstances considered, he is encouraged to proceed to define the different subjects of his researches, and by using modest, and not peremptory or arrogant arguments, hopes, in many instances, he shall attain the climax of truth if not of perfection.

This he trusts, will resist the endeavours of those, who being of envious, perverse and detrac-tive dispositions, direct their attacks and disputes, to depreciate and prejudice the merit of others, and frequently intimidate, procrastinate, and finally prevent persons of genius from exerting their abilities by producing those sentiments, that would if published, tend to the benefit of their cotemporaries.

Among the various dispositions, there are some, who are of such a self-interested and malignant principle, and have so vain an opinion of their own abilities, that they will not acknowledge any merit in others.; but influenced by the dæmoniac spirit of contradiction that is predominant in their nature, depreciate talents, in defiance to the received opinion of the more candid and liberal part of mankind, who are ever anxious to support the cause of justice. Characters of this base description, generally

nerally have the temerity to endeavour to condemn every production but those of their own associates, however distinguished by truth, good sense, and propriety.

If it is a subject of the greatest importance, in which the characters, fortunes and lives of many worthy individuals are involved, it is scarcely possible to escape their censure: they being so partial to their own talents, that it is not in their nature to allow any perfection in others. If there are devils incarnate, they are those, who prepossess their minds against merit, that is justly entitled to universal approbation.

The not having acquired a logical mode of expression, and being deficient in the rhetoric of language, have caused the works of many authors to be condemned; notwithstanding the design has been laudable, and the subjects really interesting; but it was impolitic to sentence them to oblivion, because from the speeches, conversation, and actions of lunatics and idiots, society may at particular intervals derive information and advantage.

Many persons are addicted to condemn the works of others, without being capable of producing a better system; but as there is no work perfect, he relies on the impartiality of the liberal part of mankind, to investigate his principles, previous to receiving their praise or incurring their censure.

If after a minute examination of the ideas and sentiments he has communicated to the public, con-

cerning universal nature, there are any palpable errors or improprieties in his manner of advancing and defending his arguments, he solicits those virtuosos who are greater proficient in philosophy, to philosophise and produce more convincing ideas and accurate proofs on the different topics, and to demonstrate them in a more plain, concise, and systematic manner.

If through being obliged by a compliance with this request, he is convinced of the fallacy of the opinion he has promulgated: he on such a conviction, will readily retract his present tenets, and be thankful in future, for their instructive information.

To avoid prolixity, he commences the succeeding definition, in the expectation of proving competent to the arduous task of developing the profound mysteries that apparently govern and conduct the universal order of nature: and confident that the undertaking is laudable, he trusts, that his observations will be received with lenity and treated with candour.

PERTINENT OBSERVATIONS,
ON THE
PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATION.

PREVIOUS to the discussion of nature, it is requisite to remark, that many parents, guardians, and tutors, have imbibed an opinion that there is not a supreme Deity, and become apostates to the doctrine that they implicitly believed in their youth. This perversion of principle, tends to make them imagine, that all possible knowledge is concentrated in mankind: and induces them to place too great a reliance in their own power. If this alteration of faith had been substantiated in truth, the human species would have been immortal: because the understanding could not have been separated from the body to permit it to die, or detached and subdivided from it, so as to be communicated through successive generations.

The understanding, is very weak in childhood, because it is not derived from the parent, like the corporeal substance. This intellect, accumulates in strength more in some bodies, than in others; and its pro-

gress is accelerated and regulated, by the acquisition of its own energy during its practice, from the early to the more advanced æras of life. The cause of its encreasing strength, is more to be imputed to the purity of the composition of the body, than to its size or age.

Infants, from the time of their birth, encrease in knowledge, until they attain manhood: and afterwards by practice, until they become superannuated: that forebodes approaching dissolution, and is symbolical of the situation of the body, at all æras of life, when it is tired with the fatigue of its own weight, and requires sleep and rest.

Persons, that are not possessed of stability of faith, are very improper to have the care of the education of children. the unforeseen evils and mischiefs they cause to happen to their offspring and pupils and to all who have any concerns with them through life, generally recoil with accumulated force, upon themselves: for the Deity has caused human nature to operate upon itself, that the wicked and vile principled, might unintentionally prepare their own scourge.

The dependence that orphans, and
pupils

pupils have on those, who superintend their morals and education is of such importance, that it should actuate all parents, guardians, and tutors, to be as exemplary and circumspect as possible, in their words and actions, for example, in many instances, has greater influence than precept: because as the light of reason illumines the infant mind, they generally emulate the conduct of those, whom they deem worthy of imitation. During the æra of infancy, they entirely depend upon those, who have the tuition of them, for assistance and advice: so that a profligate parent, an immoral guardian, and a careless tutor, are, by the extreme peculiarity of their situation, nearly capable of perverting the natural disposition, and in the sequel, render the greatest injuries to society; whilst those of an opposite principle, have, by their influence, an opportunity of rendering their pupils, the admiration and esteem of mankind.

If the tutors of children, are of a nullifidian principle, notwithstanding the wavering of their faith, they might, by opportune caution, prevent them from discovering the weakness of their error, although the dubiousness of their tenets, cause
them

them to neglect to instruct them in those moral duties, in which they should be thoroughly initiated during the term of infancy.

The censure that should be attached to characters, who are so indifferent respecting the initiation of good morals in the rising progeny, is too obvious to require animadversion; but it is impossible for language to be energetic enough to convey an adequate idea, of the heinousness of the offences of those, who, instead of directing their instruction to children, so that it may operate to their advantage; frequently enforce it in such a manner, that it is almost certain of producing the most fatal and ignominious effects.

These erroneous principles and doctrines, have, by being inculcated into the youth of primæval ages, and communicated to the present generation, become so extremely dangerous, as to pervade and cause a general discontent in all ranks of society. Through inattention to the morals of youth, their principles have become so predominant and selfish, that heirs too frequently wish the destruction and demise of those, who are in possession of estates or personal property.

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When improper instructors of youth, have discovered that their pupils are not of a communicative disposition, and imagine, that they are possessed of sufficient capacity to keep any secrets that are entrusted to them, inviolable, they, by being actuated to place a confidence in them, begin to instil into them, the most avaricious and pernicious principles; instead of that philanthropic benevolence, that in moderation, is the greatest blessing to its possessors.

The regulation of conduct, that parents and guardians of this description advise children to pursue, is to endeavour to keep their inferiors in a state of ignorance and abject subjection: to take all advantages of their cotemporaries, that they can accomplish with propriety: and assume a servility of behaviour to those, on whom they have any dependence.

This instruction, operating on the pliancy of youth, causes peremptory austerity, impertinence, and deceit, to increase with their practice and age, until they become the leading traits of their disposition, and a part of their vices: so that they cannot be extirpated from the body, any otherwise than with the life.

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This initiation, and the reading prophane authors, causes them to disbelieve the existence of the Deity, and to be of opinion, that the universe, ever has existed, and will continue to exist to all eternity. They do not believe that there ever was a creation of animate or inanimate matter: that induces them to neglect their moral duties, and impiously conclude, that there is no future state, and consequently neither rewards or punishments after death. They are extremely sedulous to avoid committing any action, that might subject them to the infliction of the law, a conduct, from which they seldom deviate, notwithstanding, without seeming to experience any remorse, they continue to be guilty of acts of great oppression and cruelty.

Through their inattention, obstinacy, idleness, and pleasure, they become habituated to vice: neglect to trace the existence of the Deity and the origin of nature: and are so opinionated, as to deem the belief of others chimerical, and that there is no reliance on any, but their own false faith and doctrine. They, imagining that they have discovered the principle arcana of nature, proceed with impunity to commit the most flagrant criminalities.

SCEPTICISM

SCEPTICISM

Confuted by ocular demonstration.

There are some persons so sceptical, as to doubt the existing evidence of their senses: and affirm, that all they see, hear, smell, taste, feel, think, and perform during their term of life, is but a series of delusion, that originates from the imagination. This visionary error, so possesses their minds, that they distrust their own knowledge, and the existence of universal nature. Those, who support this faith, are of opinion, that life, instead of being a real certainty; is only an ideal vision, that concludes with the dissolution of bodies. They are conscious, that notwithstanding the breath exhales before the heat, out of the system, the corporeal substance returns to the elements that were its origin: and that the life becomes entirely annihilated, similar to the extinction of fire.

That the life, is of an entirely different nature from fire, is obvious, in its motion creating the different passions, which without it, could not be produced by that element. Life, is the origin of motion in the body: and as it circulates, produces fire. Life, having entered the body, is succeeded

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by fire, that is its constant attendant, in pervading animate, and inanimate matter: and is encreased in proportion to the swiftness, or slowness of the spirit in its operation on every system. Life, suddenly leaving the body, causes motion entirely to cease: and fire, afterwards to progressively exude out of the corporeal substance.

The imagination, although it is invisible, is contained in the body: and being purer than the elements or their essences, is not a mere conceit; but a positive reality. This essence of life, is a distinct essence from that of matter, although they are impregnated and incorporated together. The imagination comprehends the mind, will, and memory: and exhales out of the body at dissolution, and is of eternal duration,

The idea and the understanding, are the faculties of the soul, and by being of an electrical and sympathetic nature, are enabled to give and communicate superior strength to the imagination.

Life, is the origin of motion and found in animals: and the soul, is the monitor that inspires the imagination of the human species with idea to design, and understanding to perfect the most sublime arts and sciences,
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that cannot be accomplished by brutes, because they are entirely destitute of that superior intellect, that by being inherent in human bodies, render them capable of designing and completing the most ingenious mechanism.

These are the faculties of the soul, that by being purer than elementary matter, and impervious to sight, are erroneously deemed visionary phantoms, by those persons, who from not making proper use of the knowledge they are endowed with, become the promulgaters of the dangerous doctrine of scepticism.

The elements that form the composition of the mortal body, sympathise with the spirit and soul, in forming a junction: and operate in contact together during life, are analagous to the electric sympathy, that is more powerful than magnetism, and subsists between the life and soul of man: and the Deity and his essence. It likewise symbolises original chaos, that had water, earth, and air, latently enclosed in each firm particle or substance of matter.

Vision, is not a mere phantom; but a reality, that is communicated in a sym-
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thetic manner, by a good or evil spirit, for the purpose of improving the mind; or perverting its principles. Visions, are imperceptible to mortal sight; but are communicated in an electrical manner to the waking mind, from the exterior spirit that is in the air, to the interior life, that is in the body.

The electric life, forms the senses, is the vehicle for the soul to direct the idea and understanding, and conveys a competent knowledge, to distinguish the qualities of all objects and substances. This information, is not communicated through the medium of fire; because that is insensible in its nature.

The life, is in a continual conflict when in the body, as is exemplified by the lid of the eye, alternately opening and closing, with very little intermission during the time of being awake: and if not closed by force, remaining open after death. Sleep, proceeds from the life becoming tired; and not from the elementary body, because that composition never wearies: from being of the same nature as the exterior elements, that are insensible, and by their perpetual motion never rest, or seem to require any cessation in their operations. The
body

body would not require rest, if it did not contain the life. The light, that is the essence of life, and the body, that is the dark substance, are evidently struggling for pre-eminence.

If the limbs are chaffed or galled by travelling, it is the life that experiences the sensation of weariness; and cannot proceed from the body: because that, independent of it, is an insensitive substance, devoid of motion, as is evinced by its situation after death.

A demonstration that the life partly absents itself from the body during sleep, is, the lid of the eye closing, to assist to preserve that, which remains in the body: and our not having any knowledge of those exterior occurrences, that happen in the same apartments where we are taking repose, is a proof of the temporary suspension of the senses. Sleep, is the intermediate state, between life and death, and cannot proceed from the soul; but from the spirit: that is generally known by the appellation of the mind.

The cause of dreams is, a part of the
life

life wandering to any possible remote distance, without the body having power to act in conjunction. Although they are sometimes replete with meaning, and correspond with past, present, and future occurrences, yet, their signification is dubious, and has the appearance of fiction: through part of the mind absenting itself from the body. Dreams, seldom are perfect representations of objects: because the mind becomes obscured by being enveloped in the body, and fatigued with bearing its burthen.

During sleep, a part of the mind being absent from the body, is the cause of the memory not being sufficiently perfect for recollection: that, cannot recover its strength, until it is replenished by accumulation from the exterior spirit in the air. The return of the invigorated mind, is equally conspicuous, in the sensation of persons, who are hastily awaked from their sleep, or who have rested a sufficient time for their invigoration of the body.

The mind, being purer than matter, and of a restless nature when in the body, partly evacuates it at intervals; otherwise it could not obtain any sleep. During health, a part of the mind, when it is weary in carrying.

rying the body, voluntarily leaves its burthen, nearly in an insensitive state; but in cases of distemper, from the inequality of the elements in the animal composition, its continuance is so protracted as to prevent the return of sleep: particularly when the spirit of life is in the greatest motion: and by encreasing the circulation of the blood and fluids, produces heat, and causes a fever. Medicine, sometimes by being received into the interior of the system, diffuses itself into the pores and fibres of the stomach, and the lacterals of the bowels: and by impeding the circulation of heat, the motion of the spirit, immediately diminishes, and in part subsiding, gives an opportunity for nature to become refreshed by an interval of sleep.

That beasts dream, is obvious by the agitation that is visible in the generality of them when asleep: as is particularly observable in the dog, who frequently makes efforts to bark during his time of rest, without being capable of accomplishing his purpose: this contention for expression, is evident in the exterior motion of his mouth and body.

When either bipeds or quadrupeds, are
hastily

hastily awakened, there is an obvious momentary conflict in the body, whilst they are drawing the first breath after repose, for the recovery of sensitive life: and that the mind has not in these instances, brought to either of them, a sufficient additional supply, is demonstrated in their returning to sleep the earliest opportunity: but when the temporary suspension of the senses, of animal nature, is unmolestedly permitted to continue, until the exhausted spirit is amply replenished with its own nature: the acquisition is observable in the proportionate encrease of strength in the action of the body, the cheerfulness of the countenance, and the faculties in accomplishing the requisite offices or functions of life.

From the time of waking in the morning, the body, progressively by greater or lesser action becomes fatigued, until there is not a sufficiency of vigour remaining to support it without sleep: and after the time of repose has elapsed, the return of the spirit causes it to recover its strength. If the mind were to be entirely exhausted out of the body during sleep, there would be a cessation of life; but if any remains, its sympathetic and electric nature will cause it to accumulate, and supply the system with additional
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vigour. The mind, is an invisible substance, that continually has the body at its disposal: it guides, directs, and superintends all its actions, and has the power of raising and depressing the faculties of the body, so as to be the principal instigation of health or sickness.

Persons, who are of a changeable disposition, are so undeterminate, that the actions they resolve to perform one day, through the irresolution of human nature they waver and swerve from, the next. The instability of mankind, cannot proceed from the elements that form the corporeal substance: because that composition is invariably the same during life.

They are conscious that all creatures are composed of the purer parts of the elements, which is the greatest truth inculcated in their doctrine. But the instability of the human mind, prevents them from prosecuting this laudable research; so that instead of becoming proficient in knowledge, they are involved in the inexplicable labyrinths of error. By militating from truth, they become professors of such a variety of different and contradictory principles, that amongst the multiplicity of them, scarcely two are of

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the same mind. This variation of opinion is a confirmation of the instability of their ideas, rendering them incapable of forming any system sufficiently substantial, to elucidate the mysteries of nature. Although they acknowledge there is a vital air, they have the weakness to disbelieve immortal life, and imagine, that the animate existence of all creatures, terminates with the motion of the mortal body. If life were only of temporal duration, it would have progressively diminished, by being divided and subdivided into so many different bodies, as have existed through successive generations, and become entirely exhausted previous to this epoch of time. This would have been discovered by the diminution of the size and strength of every animal and substance, at the alternate æras of existence. If this opinion were founded on truth, our primitive ancestors would have been possessed of gigantic stature and power, and every succeeding generation, would, by degenerating in vigour and size, have convinced us of the progressive decay of human nature. This would inevitably have been the consequence, had the vital air of the deceased, terminated with their existence; instead of ascending into the atmosphere. There being

no apparent diminution in the size and strength of creatures and substances, is an incontrovertible proof of the immortality of life.

The alternate predominancy of good and evil, causes the intellectual faculties of mankind to be in a perpetual state of agitation, and from the variation they occasion in the disposition, renders the generality of persons, incompetent to trace and develop the origin of their own, or any other existence.

This bewildered state of the imagination, excites sceptics to believe, that there is no regular certainty or order in nature; but that every thing proceeds from promiscuous chance. Being unacquainted with the true literal interpretation of the words visionary, and imaginary, they positively, by an acquiescence of the existence of such things, verbally acknowledge that they are actual realities, and not ideal suppositions; therefore they are idlers, who do not endeavour to trace by laudable speculation, invisible life. If they think these communications are things devoid of existence, they should not acknowledge them to be realities, by asserting, that they are visionary and imaginary; and their confessing that they

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are continued through successive generations, is tantamount to an acknowledgment, that they are of eternal duration, and consequently superior to terrestrial bodies, who are thus rendered incapable of defining these topics. If by terming them visionary and imaginary, they wish to impress their cotemporaries with the idea that they are nonentities, the badness of the cause and the language they have selected and applied to express their meaning, are admirably calculated in unison to defeat the intent of their perfidious purpose.

Their hypothesis is so heinous, in its manifest attempt to subvert the fundamental principles of every thing that is good, and so inimical to a natural mode of reasoning, that to stigmatize it with contemptuous silence, is a proof of mercy and moderation, especially when by recurring to the motive from whence it originates, it is conspicuously deserving of the most pointed censure.

The system of subtilty and artifice, that sceptics and persons of atheistical principles adopt, in disseminating their doctrines, frequently involves in irretrievable ruin, many otherwise innocent human beings. They become victims to false sophistry and plausible

ble arguments, through the inexperience of the mind, and their not being possessed of a capacity to controvert the propositions of their fallacious cotemporaries.

These observations prove the incredulous, to be the most unpardonable of delinquents, who inculcate into the more believing part of mankind, the most destructive and pernicious tenets. Credulity is a pardonable offence; but incredulity, in the belief of those things that are manifested in the operations of nature, is unpardonable.

In answer to the promulgaters of this doctrine. If life, instead of being a reality, was but the result of fancy, a general dullness, stupor, and lassitude, would pervade the corporeal system; and there could not exist that poignancy of perception that is so conspicuous in every thing that possesses sensation. The genius, instead of having various action, would be limited, the sight instead of being clear, would be obstructed, the hearing instead of being lively, would be obtuse, the smell instead of being acute, would be dull, the taste instead of being delicious would be insipid, the feeling instead of being electric, would be torpid, and the speech instead of being articulate, would be as unintelligible

intelligible as the sound of creatures, possessed of life without a soul. To these imaginary, visionary dreamers, this answer might with great propriety be applied, that the testimony of our senses, is an incontrovertible confirmation of the certainty of the existence of all things.

The life in the body is only conspicuous by its actions, and cannot proceed from fire: because that element has a natural tendency to destroy all consumable substances, and evaporate, and ascend into the atmosphere. The fire that is enclosed in the body, is created by the motion of life, and compelled to circulate in an opposite direction, downwards with the blood and fluids, and throughout the limbs or extremities.

The mind has such a controuling influence in the body, as to cause us to be in continual hopes and fears, that as they alternately predominate, direct its actions. This is the cause of human nature being so variously agitated with conflicting passions, that by sympathy harmonises; or by antipathy disturbs the mind and is the only argument that can be advanced in favour of the supporters of scepticism.

Visionary

Visionary appearances, should be believed by those who are favoured with a sight of them; because they originate from motion, that is the basis and essence of life. But what has brought visionary appearances into disbelief, is, the absurd fictions that have been fabricated by persons of demoniac principles, who from being hostile to the cause of truth, have violated it with a manifest intention of bringing these appearances into disesteem. To successfully accomplish their insidious designs, they have ingeniously fabricated erroneous tales of miraculous visions, and by having excluded the possibility of events, have caused positive realities, to be doubted by persons of greater veracity and character.

Visions, cannot be nonentities: because during life, they occupy space in the body: and after death, they occupy space amongst the universal electric spirit of the Deity. These visions, are infused into the imagination, through the fluctuating predominance and alternate influence of good and bad sympathy, according, and communing with the life and soul in the body: because they are of the same essence and substance, as good and evil spirits: and by instigation,
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causes them to vary the dispositions, opinions, and actions of mankind.

The faculties of the idea and understanding of the soul, and the sensation of sight in the human body, are the principal conductors of all possible knowledge, and receive all visionary influence through the communication of the electric spirit. The sympathy that exists between the external spirit in the air, and the internal spirit in the body, is the manner that visions are electrically conveyed to the idea. These visions pass from soul to soul: and are conducted in all directions through the extent of space: from and to every possible distance, by the alternate ascendancy of angelic and dæmoniac influence, in as electric and instantaneous a manner as lightning descends through the clouds to the earth.

The soul being derived from the substance of the Deity, the animal life, from his essence and his omnipresence pervading and filling all finite space, are collectively the cause of the sympathetic influence extending from invisible existence, through visible bodies, with greater velocity than the operation of electricity.

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The invisible spirit of the Deity is incorporated in every living body and inanimate substance, and occupies every part of intervening space, whether filled with rays of the sun, or particles of air, and is the vehicle that conducts sensitive knowledge from and to animals, when awake, by instruction; and when asleep, by dreams and involuntary motion, to insensitive objects.

The universal electric spirit conveys those ideas and visions to the souls of mankind, that sometimes occur from good, and at others, from evil agents. These communications are superior to the life that is in the human species, and the sensitive instinct of all subordinate animals.

The influence of the spirit, from being invariably of the same nature in all situations, is the conductor that conveys the instigation of invisible existence to the mind of human creatures, and enables them to communicate and extend their sympathy or antipathy to any distance, from one body to another. This produces such a similarity of effect, that those persons who are not of a very penetrative understanding, cannot, during the time they are experiencing its

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impulse, distinguish whether it originates in themselves, or proceeds from invisible existence

A principal part of mankind, who imagine themselves enlightened, are conscious that they are possessed of the power of instigating in some degree, the thoughts and actions of others: that depends upon the intellectual capacity of those to whom they direct their operations. Thus persons of stability of mind, are not so liable to become their victims, as others of a more pliant disposition. It is the practising this superior impulse, that enables persons, of good dispositions, to stimulate others to virtue and an acknowledgement of the truth; and persons of bad dispositions, to actuate others to vice, and triumph over the reason of their fellow creatures. It is this governing influence, that enables mankind to domesticate animals, and cause them to know and be subservient to their will, by a thought or look: so wonderfully does instinct operate on inferior existence. The extent of this power is obvious in the effects it produces on animals, that are situated at a distance from the person who is enforcing his influence upon their inferior nature, that is particularly conspicuous when they are governable

governable, and have not by ill usage, been irritated to anger.

If the effect of influence is so successfully directed when in a body, it certainly must be infinitely more powerful when it operates independent of that corporeal incumbrance. There is an absolute necessity for spiritual existence seldom to appear to mortal beings: because, were they to be frequent, there would be no intrinsic goodness, or positive evil in actions, through their being caused by this operative influence. It is very necessary that the souls of mankind, by being gloomed in a body, should not have so frequent an intercourse with spiritual existence: for if those ærial beings were continually before us, fear of their superior power would incline to good, and by not acting from ourselves, there would be no real merit in the most virtuous action. The Deity, in placing us in a precarious situation where we are surrounded by good and harm of every description, has manifested his wisdom in a superior manner, and given all persons an opportunity of proving their disposition.

Although spiritual, seldom appear to human beings, yet they continually instigate
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them in some degree or other: and conscience is the criterion by which we know the satisfaction, or displeasure, with which the Deity views and reviews our thoughts, words and actions, that is communicated to us, by those congratulatory emotions that accompany a sense of rectitude; and the agonizing remorse, that disturbs those, who are of a diametrically opposite principle. This sympathetic, or antipathetic influence is conveyed by the electric spirit, similar to the manner that an iron rod conducts lightning to this earth.

When any person is endeavouring to falsely scandalize another, render him a private injury or effectuate his ruin, without any provocation or just cause for such actions, there is such an instinct in nature, that the innocent party is frequently, without knowledge of the accusation, promiscuously caused to appear, and confront his accuser: especially if they reside in the same neighbourhood. This is obvious in their often without design, accidentally meeting, or being unexpectedly introduced into the same company. Such interviews seldom occur amongst those who are sincere friends. This seems to evince the innocence of the injured person; and is an inevitable

inevitable source of vexation to the feelings of the mind of the unjust oppressor. If the accuser and the accused reside at different parts of the world, the intervening distance, may during a considerable time, prevent their meeting each other; but probably, casual occurrences may promiscuously happen to bring them together, as if providence had manifestly designed it for the justification of the injured. Thus malignant minded persons, until they discontinue their evil designs, and unjust accusations, are liable to experience that remorse of mind, and fear of being exposed to censure, that causes a confusion in their words and actions, at those disagreeable interviews.

The guilty should be modestly reproved before their superiors, equals, and dependants, if the presence of either is necessary to excite them to a proper sense of shame. Their criminalities ought to be represented in their absence to different companies, to prevent other innocent persons from becoming their victims; but without exaggeration, so that should the culprit unexpectedly hear of it, it might reclaim and prevent the continuation of his nefarious practices. This moderation in the recital of facts, will tend more to the amendment of delinquents, than
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an amplification of circumstances, that from irritating a depraved mind, frequently produces an accumulation of mischief.

The Guilty by the exertion of free agency, may, during a course of time, avoid the sight of those whom they have injured; but through the interposition of Providence, unless death intervenes, at some crisis or other, they generally meet with those who have been the dupes of their artifice. There are certainly many exceptions to this rule, that in particular instances counteract the prevalence of this universal influence, from perplexed occurrences that are more or less predominant, through the circumstances that intervene in life, by producing family discords, and various other embarrassments.

Visions, are not of an elementary nature, and with ease enter and vacate the body. They are perceptible to the idea and understanding, and operate with greater power on some persons than on others, in proportion to their good, or evil disposition. This is caused through the ubiquity of the electric spirit, conveying the alternate predominant angelic, or demoniac influence to the soul, that acting in conjunction with the body, passes from one person to another, and by
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its operation, actuates them to be in a state of tranquility; or inquietude.

Persons of a sceptical disposition, acknowledge that the invisible influence of the mind, has such an ascendancy over the body, that it is the principal cause of the fluctuation of health and distemper. The elevation of the animal spirit, in proportion to the circumstances of life, is more effectual than the most salutary medicine; and the alternate depression of it, more prejudicial to the corporeal substance, than any other occurrence.

There are many so deficient in judgment, that they will not give themselves time, to scrutinize into invisible existence, and are consequently incapable of discovering spiritual, from elementary nature. Their minds, through an habitual neglect, become so perverted in process of time, that they are callous to conviction: and when advanced in age, and nature is enfeebled, it is impossible for them to retract their error.

The mind, corresponding with the various occurrences that happen to human nature, causes the encrease and diminution of its agitation, and visitation by dreams and visions, to be more or less frequent, through
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the interior spirit in the body, and the exterior spirit in the air, co-operating in a fluctuating manner, by their continual endeavours to progressively effectuate the growth and perfection, and afterwards the decay and dissolution of the body.

When extraordinary visions appear in the day, they either seem to issue from a central substance of light, extending in every circumambient direction; or from spectres that can only be distinguished from corporeal bodies, by their sudden appearance, and disappearance; and when they happen in the night, there is less certainty of their reality, because intervening substances, frequently produce deceptive shades. These visions so seldom happen, that persons ought not to invent fallacious fictions of the appearance of such spiritual objects, to deceive and mislead the credulous part of mankind. But there are other visions of less consequence, that frequently occur by day and night, and are as natural to the sensation of the soul, as disease is to the body. They vary in proportion to the meritorious, or perverse principles of mankind, and to the infirmities of human nature; but a penetrative observer, may easily define their origin. They are most frequent and alarming, in times of mental,
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and corporeal affliction, and at the approach of age: for as the body loses its vigour, and wastes in substance, the spirit obtains the ascendancy, and permits the soul, more clearly to distinguish objects of its own nature. This is very properly deemed, a weakness of the corporeal system. But were these visions caused by the elements that compose the human structure, they would encrease and diminish, with vigour and health; so that they evidently proceed from the soul.

These visions, are either glimpses of light, or dark bodies, that are continually changing their forms, and are sometimes of a greater or lesser size. The uncertainty of their appearance and duration, have caused them to be deemed phantoms, by those, who from their accustomed idleness, have not endeavoured to discover their source. Hypochondriac persons, and those whose senses are deranged by the weak and relaxed state of the nerves, frequently see these spiritual objects, and the difficulty of ascertaining their shape, through the imperfection of the corporeal eye, causes them to be deemed imaginary conceits. Those disorders, originate from the disproportion of the elements that compose the body, or some ob-

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fructions in the passages impeding the natural evacuations, or receiving too great a quantity of aliment into the system, that by causing a stagnation of the blood produces a plethora, or too little food, that occasion a violent circulation of the fluids, creates a fever and ascends into the brain. Persons in either of these deplorable situations, are frequently, through the inexperience and the superficial understanding of their attendants, deemed to be insane, or that their disorder proceed from the effects of inebriety. If they were produced by epicurism, or intoxication, the fumes of the diet and liquor, if not augmented, would progressively exude, through the passages and pores of the body, and head: and from their superabundance becoming evaporated, the disorder would consequently, in a few days be eradicated from the system.

The spirit of life, in this manner, is liable to be encreased, or obstructed in its operations, so that those afflictions cannot proceed from the irregularity of the elements in the composition of the body; but may from the fumigating heat of the stomach when empty, extending to the head. Life cannot, in these circumstances, continue long without the Body receiving sustenance

nance. Nor are distempers the cause of a continued insanity, as is evident in beasts never losing their senses, except when the hydrophobia is prevalent amongst dogs, and the canine contagion is communicated from them, to other animals. From these inferences it is obvious, that subordinate animals are not affected with a continued insanity, so that a considerable duration of such distressing maladies, is only experienced by the human species, through its being derived from the soul, that is of a spiritual and not a corporeal substance.

Such uncommon afflictions as are incident to mankind, and not to inferior animals, could not occur, without the interference of an extraordinary, invisible agency: because we are composed of the same elements, and inhaled with the same spirit of life, as the more subordinate creatures in existence, though distributed in different proportions.

Distempers in their greatest extent of infection, independent of the operation of spiritual influence, do not derange, but obscure sensation. Spiritual visitations of this nature, proceed from the predominance of dæmoniac influence, and sometimes in-

stigate the mind to impair the body, so as to render it impossible for it to be restored by the aid of medicine. This ought to convince mankind, that neither the spirit of life, or the soul, is an elementary substance

A temporary suspension of the animal faculties, may proceed from the obstruction of the fluids, or weakness of the system; but when it continues for a series of years in a healthy body, it proceeds from the effect of a superior influence. When the soul is of too antipathetic a nature, to receive the sympathetic influence of the angelic spirits, they withdraw their communication, and it is exposed to the horrors of dæmoniac infliction; unless the Deity accepts it as an atonement for our past faults, or those of our ancestors.

As the generality of mankind are not acquainted with the manner that invisible agency stimulates their thoughts, and influences their actions, it is requisite to observe, that it is conveyed from all possible distance, to every person, by the universal electric essence, pervading and operating through the interior spirit and soul in the body.

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The influence of the soul, operating upon the animal life in the body, frequently perverts the mind of some persons, and causes them to disbelieve the evidence of sight, that is the only visible demonstration of existence. Many persons who conceive themselves of a very penetrative understanding, attribute visions, to the dazzling of the eye, without being able to substantiate such an assertion by proof, from not being possessed of sufficient capacity to define the cause.

Some visions, being substances of a purer and whiter light, than the flame of a fire, or a candle, are generally most conspicuous at first rising from sleep, when the day is encreasing; but those that are seen in the evening, are not so perceptible or bright: because the eye of the body has become dimmed by the air, and the exercise of the chaffing of the lid, has rendered it heated and fatigued, that by obstructing the sight, changes the effect of the lucid vision, so as to cause it to appear to be of a darker colour. Those who are in tolerable health, have frequent opportunities of perceiving these visions, or sudden glimpses of light.

Many persons affirm, that the eye is powerfully affected, by meeting with, and
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refracting the light; but as visions are generally perceptible before that optical organ has been fixed upon any luminous object, it is impossible for them to originate from that cause, they being as often visible when the sight is extended to any dark terrene object; as when directed towards the rays of that celestial luminary, the sun. When the sight is intently fixed upon any body of light, it is on its removal, so excessively dimmed, that it cannot, during an interval of some moments, look with steadiness upon other objects, so as to distinguish their shape and colour.

Spiritual substances, are of so pure and soft a nature, that they pervade the mortal body, but without rendering it material injury, yet the manner that they affect the senses, is a proof of their sympathetic, or antipathetic influence that can only be known by their contrary operations and effects.

Internal visions, that proceed from good agency, are splendid bodies of light; and those that proceed from evil agency, are likewise bodies of light, but much inferior in brightness. They at various times, imperceptibly enter the soul, and are incorporated, during a short interval, in the human system.

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